GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:359
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2001
USE OF CALCIUM CARBIDE
HANNAN MOLLAH

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of large scale use of banned calcium carbide for ripening of fruit especially in mangoes in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for allowing large scale use of calcium carbide which can cause cancer;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to provide alternative chemicals to wholesale fruit merchants for ripening of fruits;

(d) whether there are no standards for testing adulteration since Mango, Papaya and other fruits are perishable commodities; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken against offenders?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFFERED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.359 DUE FOR REPLY ON 16TH AUGUST, 2001.

(a) to (e): There have been a few Press Reports in the past alleging sale of fruits ripened by use of carbide gas in the markets.

Rule 44 AA of the PFA Rules 1955, prohibit the sale of fruits which have beenartificially ripened by use of acetylene gas, commonly known as carbide gas.

Ripening of fruits in natural form is acceptable phenomenon. There is no proposal to provide alternate chemicals to artificially ripening of fruits.

Excess Calcium Carbide power remains on the surface of the fruits.Such powders are visible to naked eye. Confirmatory test that the powder is of Calcium Carbide can be performed by chemical analysis.

The Food Health Authorities of States/UT Governments have been asked from time to time to keep a vigil on use of carbide gas in ripening of fruits and take legal action for violation of above provisions.